

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 556

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the members of The Singing Echoes upon winning “The Favorite Band of 2008” at the Southern Gospel Music Fanfair Awards.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those families who, through their extraordinary musical abilities, have distinguished themselves as public figures of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, several such noteworthy individuals are the members of The Singing Echoes, a gospel group that was recently voted “The Favorite Band of 2008” at the Southern Gospel Music Fanfair Awards; and

WHEREAS, The Singing Echoes originated as a family band in 1969, with the first members being Max and Lela Epperson; their two sons, Lynn and Gary; and Gary’s wife, Debbie; during many years in gospel music, the Eppersons have become a well-known name in the industry, and though some of the members have changed, the band’s zeal for lifting up the Savior in song has never diminished; and

WHEREAS, in 1973, The Singing Echoes received a Grammy nomination for their arrangement and performance of the song “When I Wake up to Sleep no More”; their style of old fashioned, down-home singing has inspired many nationally acclaimed groups to record this song; and

WHEREAS, bringing the work of prominent songwriter Squire Parsons into the gospel realm, The Singing Echoes recorded “Look For Me at Jesus’ Feet,” which set off a domino effect of hits for the band, including “Shouting Happy,” which was later recorded by The Kingsmen, “I Made a Covenant With my Lord,” which was also later recorded by The Kingsmen, and “His

Tomb is Empty Now,” a song written by Lela Epperson and still recorded by many gospel groups today; and

WHEREAS, some of The Singing Echoes’ next big hits included “Two Coats,” later recorded and performed in the movie *The Apostle*, “On the Other Side of Jordan” later recorded by The Singing Cookes, “I’ll Wear a White Robe,” “On Heaven’s Bright Side,” “Thank You Lord,” “Enter In,” and “Look for Me,” which introduced writer Gerald Sweatman to gospel music; and

WHEREAS, also included in the famed gospel hits recorded by The Singing Echoes is “When I Go Strolling,” written by Gary Epperson; the ever-popular “It’s Enough,” also written by Gary Epperson, was recorded in 1985 and climbed to number two in the nation on the *Singing News Chart*; and

WHEREAS, “Beautiful Heaven” and “On Holy Ground,” written by Gary Epperson, both remained on the *Singing News Chart*’s top twenty for months; “Keep Your Eyes on Him,” “I’m Depending on Jesus,” and “The Next Glory Flight,” were all top-forty songs that were also written by Gary Epperson; and

WHEREAS, for their extreme talent and their significant contributions to gospel music in Tennessee and across the nation, The Singing Echoes were recognized by the State of Tennessee and by Governor Lamar Alexander, who appointed them as “Ambassadors of Good Will” for the State; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, Gary and Debbie’s son, Joshua, who had traveled with the group since he was only two weeks old, joined his family onstage to sing the tenor part at the young age of eight; in 1990, Lynn’s oldest son, Jeremy, also joined the singing group at the age of fourteen, as the full-time drummer; and

WHEREAS, both Jeremy and Joshua had enjoyed singing onstage with the family even before they were old enough to start school; and

WHEREAS, due to health complications, Max and Lela left the road, retiring in 1995; shortly after their retirement, Lynn’s other two sons, Adam and Matt, joined the group as full-time members; and

WHEREAS, though Lela's heart was broken by her inability to travel and sing on stage, it brought her great joy to see her four grandchildren following in her footsteps, filling in for her and for Max; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, *Singing News Magazine* featured the Epperson family and The Singing Echoes, focusing on the third generation of Eppersons to perform onstage, and, in April of 2001, the *Gospel Voice* also recognized The Singing Echoes; and

WHEREAS, in September of 1999, Lela went on to her eternal reward, and Max soon followed, passing away in July of 2004; both left behind an enduring legacy in gospel music; and

WHEREAS, this year, The Singing Echoes celebrate thirty-six years in gospel music, with some of their latest releases including, "Think I'm Excited," "In the Shadow of God's Wings," "My God's Alive," "Time After Time," "Inside of Me," and "Looking Forward to Where I've Never Been"; and

WHEREAS, as testament to the group's timeless gospel songs, The Singing Echoes' powerful song, "Empty Hands," and their top hit, "Somebody's Here," have recently climbed to the top of gospel charts; and

WHEREAS, their latest video, *Live in Anderson, SC*, which features "That's How Much I Love You," has found a special place in the hearts of thousands of people across the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Singing Echoes' most recent CD, titled *Then & Now*, features a number of incredible songs such as, "Jesus is Coming," "He Still Moves the Stones," "I Can't Begin to Tell," "Miracles," "Between the Cradle and the Grave," "When a Meeting is Going to Break Out," "The Great Falling Away," "The Spirit Calling Me," "Lord Have Mercy on Me," and "Someday"; and

WHEREAS, The Singing Echoes are a superior gospel group who serve as an example of the result of generations influenced by prayer, hard work, dedication, family, love, and a passion for serving God; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the members of The Singing Echoes,

congratulate them upon winning “The Favorite Band of 2008” at the Southern Gospel Music Fanfair Awards, and wish them every success and happiness in all their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.